

For the Journal.

**Minnesota—Improvements Wanted—Politics.**

In my letter from Galena of the 1st inst., a want of room obliged me to omit these subjects.

To afford facilities for the settlement of new countries, the quickest and cheapest modes of conveyance are requisite. "Time is money," and but few in this age of improvements in steam power are content to travel at no greater rate by the day than can be accomplished by the horse. The Mississippi can now be reached from various points wholly by railroads, or partly by steamers; and the river is there navigable to the capital of the territory; but at low or even common stages of the water, there are obstructions above St. Louis which ought to be removed, particularly at the rapids at Keokuck, and at the head of Rock Island. The removal of these would greatly facilitate commerce and cheapen transportation. Congress has already made appropriations for commencing these works, but a considerable more will be wanting to complete the objects.

The Minnesota river is a winding stream, passing through a delightful and fertile country, and is navigable for a middling class of steamboats to Fort Ridgley, 200 miles above its junction with the Mississippi; but except when the water is fully at a common height its navigation is obstructed, slightly at various points, but particularly at the rapids, 50 miles above Fort Snelling. To remove all these obstructions and make such improvements in the navigation of the river as the commerce on it at no distant day will warrant, might require an expenditure of \$150,000; but one-third, or even one-fourth of that sum would remove the main obstructions, so that it could be navigated to Fort Ridgley, except at the very lowest stages of water. The saving to the government in making their disbursements to the Indians and in sustaining the garrison, and the saving to individuals in transportation on the river, would in one year very nearly or perhaps entirely pay the whole sum expended.

The territory wants an extension of the Chicago & Galena railroad up the river to St. Paul, and from thence to the St. Louis river, near the west end of Lake Superior; the latter, a distance of only about 130 miles, is of the most immediate importance, opening as it would a direct communication via the great chain of northern lakes with New York and Canada. The bill which has recently passed the house of representatives, makes a liberal donation of lands for these roads, and they are destined at no distant day, to be built; and with the line of these roads will follow the telegraph wires. The aid which the government might afford in furtherance of these improvements would do vastly more towards settling the territory and developing its resources than the passage of the homestead bill. The completion of the canal at Saut St. Marie, connecting the navigation of Lake Superior with Huron, will make an important extension of inland commerce, the effects of which will be immediately felt in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Another projected improvement is the great Atlantic and Pacific railroad, passing through this territory. The partial reports of Gov. Stevens's exploration afford such light upon the subject as leaves but little doubt that the route through this territory to Puget's Sound is the shortest, easiest of construction, and cheapest of any other one which has been examined. A more central route, if the government undertake to extend aid to any considerable degree, may perhaps stand a better chance than this; but eventually a road must be built over this route. Application has already been made to government to open an emigrant road.

The politics of territories are always measurably controlled by the federal government, if they see fit to do it. The late administration was however so much absorbed in one idea, that more was thought of that than of the friends by whom it had been brought into power. But there is not much danger that the present one will not take care to reward its friends.

Alexander Ramsey, the late governor and superintendent of Indian affairs, was appointed by President Taylor, and discharged his duties with that promptness and fidelity

which met the approbation of the candid and intelligent of all parties; but this did not secure him from the attacks of a few selfish Indian traders and restless politicians. During the year 1852 he was charged with having defrauded the Indians in making a payment to them. The cry was reiterated, with all the assurance that the opportunity only was wanted to substantiate it by proof. An investigation was ordered by the U. S. senate; and his successor, Gov. Gorman, and Judge Young, of Illinois, to attend to taking testimony and report to the senate. The senate, after having examined the testimony, unanimously exonerated him from all censure. Gov. Gorman sent in a bill for expenses, in which he charged for himself 87 days, stationery, &c., at \$5 per day, \$696, and the further sum of \$720 for services of attorney general of Minnesota, marshal, notary public, and copying records. The senate refused to allow the governor for his services, for the reason that as governor and superintendent of Indian affairs he received a salary of \$2500. The other items in the bill were allowed, and an additional sum for the payment of witnesses for the prosecution and defence, amounting in the aggregate to nearly \$2,000. Thus, the attempt to blast the reputation of a faithful public agent reverted upon the heads of its projectors. The governor is affable in his deportment, and seems disposed to communicate freely with emigrants who want information. Upon the wisdom of his management of interests entrusted to his care as governor and superintendent of Indian affairs, there is some difference of opinion among the democrats—as for the opinion of the opposition, it is not very material to enquire, as at present it would be of very little consequence any way. It is hardly to be expected that an officer who holds his place at the will of another, liable with or without cause to removal any day, will act independently.

In passing up the Mississippi, the governor, several other U. S. officers and congressional log-rollers were on board the boat on their return from Washington. They seemed perfectly positive as to the ultimate passage of Douglas's Nebraska bill. They had been permitted to look behind the curtain and take a view of the dough-faces who had been secured to insure the passage of this infamous bill. While in the territory I learned that Douglas's speech had been sent broadcast over the land.

In passing up the Minnesota on the S. B. Black Hawk, the governor, Maj. S. U. S. A., and several other officers, including one of the territorial judges, and land speculators, were on board; the conversation turned on the probability as the passage of the Nebraska bill. Its passage seemed to be considered as settled, although rather regretted by those who expressed any opinion as to its merits. The president's veto of indigent insane land bill was mentioned, but handled very carefully. Judge C. said that he had been utterly astonished at the president's veto of that bill, but when he came to read the message he found that it was all right, the president's reasoning removed all objections! The thought involuntarily struck me that the judge's salary was of much more consequence to him than the boasted birthright of freedom, freedom of speech and a free exercise of the right of suffrage.

St. Paul is the center of political influence. With the seat of government, the residence of most of the territorial officers, two-thirds of the press, and about one-fifth of the population, there is but little difficulty in exercising a controlling influence over the internal interests of the territory.

OBSERVER.

**THE DRUNKARD'S CLOAK.**—In the time of Oliver Cromwell, the magistrates in the north of England punished drunkards by making them carry what is called the drunkard's cloak. This was a large barrel, with one head out, and a hole in the other, through which the offender was made to put his head, while his hands were drawn through two small holes, one on each side. With this he was compelled to march along the public streets.

What a strange sight it would be were all the drunkards now-a-days compelled to march about wearing barrels for cloaks.

**St. Louis—Slavery in Missouri—Benton.**

Harris, of the Cleveland Herald, has been taking a run through the Western States.—His letters home are filled with the results of his observations. In his last, from La Salle, Illinois, he speaks of what he saw and heard in St. Louis. We thought of making a synopsis, but find it impossible to abridge his notes without depriving the reader of much that is interesting. The extract below will repay perusal from the view it gives of the real condition of public sentiment in Missouri on the topics that now agitate the public mind:

The Public Schools of St. Louis are modeled after those of Eastern cities, and are good. The Churches are numerous, but not extravagantly expensive. The Cathedral, though magnificent twenty years ago, now appears small and plain amid the tall surrounding business blocks. The warehouses and the wholesale stores are very large, and the Tobacco warehouses of enormous extent. Belcher's Sugar Refinery is one of the most extensive establishments in St. Louis, and a single shot tower rises like a monumental shaft in the midst of the city. A little north of the city is the most extensive Iron Works in the West, and manufactories of various kinds send up smokes in every direction. The growth of St. Louis for a few years past has been unexampled, and the prices of real estate have had a balloon tendency. Lands two miles and a half from the city, which changed hands a dozen years ago at \$50 per acre, now sell for country seats at \$5,000; and city lots are equally up, with a higher prospect. There is wealth, substantial capital, and reliable business to back St. Louis, and her natural commercial advantages, have hitherto been unrivalled. But this "Age of Iron" will cut off some of those advantages, unless her citizens hasten to construct artificial avenues for steam. She has but a single railroad, and that completed only some forty miles westward, and not doing business enough to pay the cost of running it. It has the high sounding name of Pacific Railroad; but the free State Iowa boasts that she will complete her link in the road to California across her broad lands from the Mississippi to the Missouri at Council Bluffs, before the slave-paralyzed Missouri extends her Pacific Railroad even to her own capital. Iowa will do it. That young free State is already as much ahead of old slave-cursed Missouri in enterprise, energy, public improvements and prosperity, as Ohio transcends Kentucky. The railroads leading east and north, which strike the Mississippi above St. Louis and will soon tap the Missouri several hundred miles up, cannot fail to divert to the Commercial Emporium of the Atlantic a considerable portion of the travel and trade of the Northwest, so long monopolized by the great Central City of the Rivers.

The subject of slavery is discussed with great freedom by Missourians, and its blighting effects on St. Louis and the State are universally admitted. Although it exists in its mildest form, the non-slaveholders in St. Louis and most portions of the State outnumbering the slaveholders more than five to one, the institution rests like an incubus on the whole people. It is felt, it is crushing, and how to shake it off is the question.—Intelligent Missourians, well qualified to judge, assure us that could the question of gradual emancipation be fairly and properly submitted to the vote of the people of the State, it would carry by a large majority.—The position and course of Col. Benton on the subject of the acquisition of Texas, his opposition to the schemes of the ultra slave propagandists and nullifiers of the South, and his fearless and powerful denunciation of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the traitorous designs concocted by Atchison of Missouri, Mason of Virginia, Brown of Mississippi, and Butler of South Carolina, and pushed forward by their tool Douglas, have infused a most liberal spirit of discussion of the whole question of slavery, and its aggressions and movements against free territory, among the constituents of "Old Bullion." We have heard the Kansas-Nebraska outrage frequently and indignantly denounced by intelligent and influential Missourians, and the opinion expressed by well informed citizens that a vote in the State on the Missouri Compromise would be

at least five to one against its repeal. The people of the North opposed to slavery extension can hardly appreciate how much is due to Col. Benton for the stand he has taken in behalf of freedom, without visiting the theatre of his contests on the stump, and triumphs at the ballot box. It is admitted by his opponents that he will be re-elected to Congress from the St. Louis district, his friends think by a large majority; and they claim that could the question of Senatorship be decided by a direct vote of the people, the Senator for thirty years would again be triumphantly returned. As it is, the Whigs and Anti-Benton democrats expect to be able to prevent his election by the Legislature.

The Benton Democratic journals of St. Louis and the State, and the Whig press of Missouri generally, the St. Louis Republican excepted, have opposed manfully the Nebraska bill of Douglas; and such is the present state of feeling that the term "Abolitionist," applied to Benton and his supporters, has lost its former mad-dog potency. A thorough going old Whig friend, who has resided in St. Louis some fifteen years, informed us that he never "bridled his tongue" on the subject of slavery and its evils any more than when in Ohio, and declared his readiness to shoulder his musket, if need be, and march to Nebraska to aid in keeping out the "peculiar institution." He thinks slavery can never triumph in Kansas or Nebraska, but on this subject Missourians differ. A very observing, intelligent gentleman, who spent two years in traversing Kansas and Nebraska, and is now a Benton candidate for the State legislature of Missouri, speaks of the soil and climate of the territory thrown open to slavery as very fine, equal to any part of the adjoining slave States. Some three hundred miles square of the territory he pronounces, from personal examination, the most inviting in the Union for agricultural purposes, and the slaveholders along the border know the choice spots and have already formed combinations to enter upon them and establish the "Squatter Sovereignty." They have held public meetings, regularly organized companies, chosen their register of claims, and pledged themselves to stand by each other at all hazards. No claims are to be recognized unless far enough apart to make the usual slave plantations; and Abolitionists, as all non-slaveholding settlers are termed, are to be hunted out and driven off! To the inquiry—"Will the Government tolerate such proceedings?"—the reply was, "That not an instance could be found on record for many years in which the squatters have been restrained by the Government no matter how lawless and defiant had been their proceedings. The history of the Platte country is in point and may be taken as an index of the future in Kansas and Nebraska. Unless slavery is allowed to have its own way there, bloody conflicts are certain to take place, sooner or later."—The resolutions adopted by the meetings of slaveholders at Westport and other places in Western Missouri, go to confirm the opinions expressed by the Benton Democrat, and should furnish additional incentives to the friends of free territory everywhere to let all old party by-gones be by-gones, and to rally as one man for the repeal of the Kansas-Nebraska law repealing the Missouri Compromise. This is a living issue—an issue forced by Slavery upon Freedom.—Who will prove recreant? Who be a dough-face, or higgie about dead issues, when slavery dares to pollute free soil long consecrated by sacred compact?

The "Blue Hen's Chicken," of Wilmington, Delaware, lays the following before its readers:

There is living, in Tatnall street, a colored man aged 68, who is the father of 51 children, 30 of whom are now living. He had three wives, the first of whom was the mother of 15 children, two of whom were twins. The second was the mother of 15, having twins three times; the last, who is still alive, has 21 children, having had twins five times. We venture that there is scarcely such another case on record.

**CHEAP TRAVELING.**—The Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton railroad has made a great reduction in fare. Passengers are now taken through to New York for ten dollars.